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AUTHOR Shim, Jae Chul
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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the group-related literature of intergroup relations and combines it with the existing theory of communications. Noting that communication scholars have recently entered this realm of intergoup relations and searched for the role of mass media in the process of ethnic newcomers' socialization, the paper conceptualizes assimilation in a new way and compares it to the problematic concept of acculturation. Then, the paper discusses the influence of intergroup contacts on the newcomer's integration into or segregation from his or her host society. It also demonstrates different effects of ethnic and mainstream host media, and utilizes such macro-structural variables as the population size of ethnic communities and their geographical locations. The paper attempts to build a new theoretical framework of intergroup relations and communication processes by applying S. Moscovici's innovation model and E. P. Hollander's transactional model of leadership to the ethnic community setting. In conclusion, the essay considers the ethnic media as community leadership resources and recommends that ethnic media innovate their production process in order to serve their audiences' information needs. (One hundred and three references are attached.) (Author/PRA)

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The Role of Mass Media and Intergroup Relations in the Process of Newcomers' Assimilation

by

Jae Chul Shim

Mass Communication Research Center
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of Wisconsin-Madison
5050 Vilas Communication Hall
821 University Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
(608) 263-4859

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Author Identification:

Jae Chul Shim is a Ph. D. candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

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Abstract

This essay reviews the group-related literature of intergroup relations and combines it with the existing theory of communications. It conceptualizes assimilation in a new way and compares it to the problematic concept of acculturation. Then, this essay discusses the influence of intergroup contacts on the newcomer's integration into or segregation from his or her host society. It also demonstrates different effects of ethnic and mainstream host media, and utilizes such macro-structural variables as the population size of ethnic communities and their geographical locations. This review attempts to build a new theoretical framework of intergroup relations and communication processes by applying Moscovici's innovation model and Hollander's transactional model of leadership to the ethnic community setting. In conclusion, this essay considers the ethnic media as community leadership resources and recommends that ethnic media innovate their production process in order to serve their audiences information needs.

The Role of Mass Media and Intergroup Relations In the Process of Newcomers' Assimilation

Cross-cultural migration and international movement are common phenomena in the period of "global villages." Today millions of people are moving around in the world beyond cultural or national boundaries (Serow, Nam, Sly, & Weller, 1990). Huge numbers of emigrants are heading for North America in particular. The United States has accepted more than half million immigrants annually in 1980s and more than 80 percent of those immigrants are non-Europeans (Statistical Abstract, 1987). The 1980 census figures also reveal that over 14 million foreign-born immigrants reside in the United States, and this figure is increasing continually. It is generally accepted that one-fifth of the population in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco is made up of foreign-born newcomers and at least one of ten is an ethnic group member in the twelve largest cities of North America (The World Almanac, 1987).

This phenomenon of migration is not only common in America but also in other countries. France has over three million non-whites; England has about the same number of minorities. In mainland China, there are at least 40 million non-Han ethnics (minorities) among whom the majority reside near or along the USSR border (Dreyer, 1976). More than one million foreigners reside permanently in Japan (Lee & De Vos, 1981). In South Korea, about forty thousand American soldiers and their families have resided continuously for more than 30 years.

Social scientists from different research traditions have considered the topic of ethnic group contacts with host cultures for a considerable time. For example, psychologists analyze the problem of intergroup bias or cognition using the individualistic approach, and sociologists tend to concentrate on broader issues, such as intergroup conflicts, using structural analysis. Social psychologists tend to confine themselves to the process of intergroup contacts by incorporating both micro and macro levels of intergroup relations. They have produced a large amount of literature concerned with social psychological issues such as stereotypes, prejudice, conformity, innovation, collective behavior and social movement.

Communication scholars have recently entered this realm of intergroup relations and searched for the role of mass media in the process of ethnic newcomers' socialization or adaptation to their host societies. Most communication scholars, however, have not ignored this issue continuously, and a few existing empirical evidences are contrary to each other and scattered in various subdivisions of communications. In addition, the issue has been analyzed mainly according to psycho-linguistic or intercultural perspectives. This trend has resulted in the dominance of individualistic models of intergroup communication (Kim, 1988; Gudykunst, 1983). If the group theme is addressed, it is generally restricted to intragroup phenomena. As a consequence, many intercultural scholars in the communication field tend to adopt a very limited approach, even though there is diverse

social psychological literature about intergroup relations.

Thus, the purpose of this essay is to suggest new theoretical guidelines of intergroup relations by bringing the main social psychological perspectives to the field of communications. Before progress can be made in understanding the role of mass media in mediating intergroup integration or stratification, communication phenomena of intergroup relations need to be understood adequately. With this reasoning in mind, the present essay focuses on 1) the explication of the concept of assimilation and compares it to the problematic concept of acculturation; 2) the influence of intergroup contacts on the newcomers' integration or segregation; and 3) the role of the media in a newcomer's integration into or segregation from his or her host society. Then it attempts to build a different theoretical framework of intergroup relations and communication processes.

The basic position of this essay is that society is fundamentally composed of groups, and that social assimilation processes need to be analyzed as group phenomena, although the individual level of assimilation should not be ignored. Secondly, this essay attempts to overcome the uncritically simplified notions that ethnic minorities think differently and that they are inherently or socio-economically inferior. Third, this essay emphasizes the importance of social networks in defining group goals and creating group interests. Fourth, this essay incorporates the idea that because ethnic minorities in the U.S.,

like the host majority, are motivated to understand their ethnic and host community environments, they use different mass media in order to understand different environments. The final and crucial argument of this essay is that ethnic media, especially newspapers, play a leadership role in shaping ethnic citizens' opinions.

I. The Nature of Assimilation and Acculturation

Whether migration should be considered an individual or a group phenomenon has long been debated in the field of demography. Hunmee Kim (1988) showed, through econometric analysis, that people tend to move in family groups headed by males who either have high earning potentials or seek to overcome family poverty. Even though some individuals move alone, they do so largely because they seek benefits for family members left behind. In addition, there are structural factors of "push" and "pull" which lead to group migration. For example, the United States readily accepted foreign labor when it experienced a shortage of labor. But England prohibited emigration when she suffered from a labor shortage (Steinberg, 1989). Because the host and home countries' structural conditions (i.e., economic depression after war) influence the way of people's migration, people tend to head toward certain place concurrently. After immigration, ethnic newcomers tend to live together in metropolitan areas of the host country and construct their own ethnic communities. They try to protect their interest as a group

from outside challenge. Thus it can be argued that migration and settlement tends to occur in groups with macro-structural factors although at the micro-social level the head of a family tends to decide, or at least influence, his or her family members' migration and adjustment to the host society. This suggests that the phenomena of assimilation and acculturation need to be analyzed at the group level.

Sociologists and anthropologists have struggled for generations to clarify the concepts of assimilation and acculturation (for a review see Teske and Nelson, 1974). Several scholars, especially within the critical tradition of communication research, have claimed that such clarification may not be productive because the term "culture" is a holistic rather than an analytical concept. As a result of researchers' unwillingness to accept the analytical concept of culture, few definitions of assimilation and acculturation can be adequately elaborated to study intergroup dynamics. Thus, these terms need to be reconceptualized.

Most scholars agree that both assimilation and acculturation denote newcomers' integration into or adaptation to the host society. Thurnwald (1932) defines newcomers' integration into the host society as "a process of adaptation to new conditions of life." Siegal and his colleagues (1953) and Spindler (1963) agree that this adaptation is a "dynamic process" of integration into the host culture. Lee and Stamm (1990) divide this dynamic integration process into 1) assimilation (structural integration)

and 2) acculturation (cultural integration). Structural integration refers to the integration of newcomers into the host societal structure which includes the political, economic and educational systems, while cultural integration can be broadly defined as internalizing host value systems.

As Lee and Stamm point out, previous scholars, for example, Gordon (1964), have used the time factor for distinguishing assimilation from acculturation: assimilation follows acculturation. But a time sequence, in itself, does not explain specific characteristics of assimilation and acculturation. If this time factor is not an essential characteristic for distinguishing two concepts, what other key elements should researchers consider? Many scholars agree that the host group's acceptance of newcomers is the most important characteristic for distinguishing assimilation from acculturation: assimilation is accomplished only when host members accept ethnic newcomers, while acculturation occurs with or without this acceptance (Lee and Stamm, 1990; Teske and Nelson, 1974). They agree with Kelman's (1961) viewpoint that the societal condition or characteristics of the host group play an important role in determining whether newcomers will adapt to the host group's norms and values.

Although Lee and Stamm's conceptual distinction of assimilation from acculturation is a step in the right direction, the dynamic view of structural integration and its distinction from cultural integration need to be elaborated, particularly in

regard to the concept of culture. Intercultural communication scholars have been divided by two views of culture: one group of scholars considers culture as an "aggregation" or "umbrella entity" of all aspects of society (Edelstein, Ito, & Kepplinger, 1989) and the other views culture as "abstract" or a "central commonality" of different individuals' ideas and values and artifacts (Rosengren, 1986).

Before moving on to the "abstract" view of culture, the "aggregation" conception of culture deserves further clarification. The English anthropologist Sir Edward B. Taylor considers culture to be "the complex whole" of ideas, sentiments, values, objects and actions which historically have been produced by human beings (Singer, 1968). Similarly, Adler (1976) defines culture as "the mass of life patterns" which has been established and transmitted over generations. The concept of culture has been vague and controversial because the terms "complex whole" and "mass of life pattern" lack clarity. The various individuals within a group react differently to encounters with people from other groups. They have different intentions, attitudes and evaluations depending on specific situations (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Thus, one may argue that culture is the "aggregation" of many different individual ideas, preferences and lifestyles without any commonality. Some scholars even consider culture to be a hypothetical entity because everything potentially can be a culture.

Culture as an "aggregation" seems not to have any common

essence. However, because people are more likely to live in a group, such as a family, peer group, small community or large society, people share common beliefs, attitudes, norms and values. These commonalities may be considered a culture. Rosengren (1986) makes this point clear and conceptualizes culture both as an ongoing process [of interaction between individuals and between groups] and as a structure within the societal system.[1] He explains that culture is a basic and common element of various societal structures. Communication scholars could view culture's function in society as analogous to the schema's function as a basic cognitive structure for processing incoming information in the human memory system. Culture has a trans-situational characteristic which is embedded in the various societal structures. The culture as "a basic societal structure" comprises the human value system, which provides basic behavioral standards for ethnic and host members to deal with everyday life. Rosengren maintains that societal subsystems such as economics, politics and education are based on the societal value system which represents the various behavioral standards of the constituents. In addition, Williams (1977) argues that culture should be considered with reference to "society" and its "economy" which is probably the most important part of the societal system.

Even though Lee and Stamm have succeeded in characterizing newcomers' adaptation processes to the host society by distinguishing the concept of assimilation (structural

integration) from acculturation (cultural integration), it has not been clarified how culture differs from structure since culture has its own structure, too. Because of this neglect of the differences between culture and societal structure, Young Yun Kim (1979) claims that the acculturation and assimilation processes are too similar to be distinguishable, but the difference should be elaborated for the analytical purpose.

This essay accepts Lee and Stamm's concept of integration (both assimilation and acculturation) and adds Rosengren's distinction between culture and societal structure. Rosengren's concept of culture is especially useful since he operationalizes mass media as cultural institutions and examines the ongoing process of interaction between mass media and societal structure. It is fair to say that there is ongoing interaction among audiences, media and societal structure. Thus, the media's dependency on the audience and society needs to be explored in conjunction with the process of newcomers' integration to the host society. This review considers assimilation to be a more useful concept than acculturation for dealing with intergroup relations since the term assimilation inherently includes interactions between ethnic newcomers and host majority members. More importantly, the term assimilation provides the conceptual foundation to explain the crucial issue of societal structures in intergroup relations. Without considering important aspects of the newcomer's new life such as his or her economic condition, intercultural communication scholars in the United States have

constructed their research questions superficially and frequently ignored important societal problems of communications connected with intergroup conflict including conflicting economic interests.

Namenwirth and Weber (1987) show that cultural change has been significantly related to fluctuations in the economy. Thus, the real issue is not only whether newcomers accept the cultural value or norms of mainstream society but also how they achieve social and economic justice by cooperating with host group members. Park (1967) shares this broad socio-structural emphasis and defines assimilation as "a process of interpenetration and fusion" in which persons and groups acquire "the memories, sentiments and attitudes" of other persons and groups. He also suggests that researchers investigate how mass communication functions as an agent of both cultural and societal structural integration of newcomers into the host society. Thus, this study attempts to explore the complexities of this assimilation process by focusing on mass media functions.

Various ethnic groups, including those among the white majority, will manifest prejudices, develop stereotypes, and engage in conflict with each other, especially before they share experiences and have a common history. The mass media reflect all these problems of intergroup relations. At the same time, the mass media, which have been located at the heart of many societal interactions, may induce different groups to respect, negotiate, and cooperate with one another for their common well-being. The

understanding of the role of communication in the process of assimilation is difficult yet critical to building better human relations.

II. Intergroup Relations of Newcomers

When newcomers enter the established structure of the host society, they build new working relationships with host members and construct new life styles. Through the host group's pressure to conform, new ethnic groups may attempt to adapt to the host group's sentiment, habit and their values (for a current review of conformity process, Moscovici, 1985). As a consequence of cultural contacts and socialization processes, a newcomer's traditional values are changed or modified. Reading newspapers and watching television can be considered as indirect or mediated intergroup contacts since both ethnic and host media cover their own news as well as counter non-ethnic group news. Thus, socialization or learning processes occur indirectly when newcomers use ethnic or host mass media.

Naturally, the consequences of intergroup contacts differ depending on different ethnic groups. African or Asian Americans have more difficulty being accepted by the white majority than European immigrants. The concept of "norm of homogamy" may work in this case. A social norm generally requires that friends, lovers, and spouses be characterized by similarity in skin color, ethnicity, religion and socioeconomic status. From the standpoint of intergroup relations, it suggests that people in the group

reject and dislike those who are different from its own group members (Festinger and Schachter, 1951). In this case, negative traits were overattributed to the infrequently appearing group (Stephan, 1985).

Lauman (1973) claimed that similarities in status, attributes, beliefs and behaviors facilitate the formation of intimate (or consensual) relationships among incumbents of social groups. He described that the bonds of pluralism are strengthened in urban social networks in either ethnic or host communities. These bonds or constructions of social networks relate closely to the ethnocentrism or in-group favoritism which implies a unidirectional bias in evaluation, that is, the tendency of a group to evaluate in-group members more favorably than out-group members (for the review, see Brewer, 1979). The host groups also tend to evaluate ethnic newcomers unfavorably by applying "dominant social norms" until these ethnic groups are fully integrated into the host social structure (Lippman, 1922).

The close bonds of group members also relate to the in-group heterogeneity and out-group homogeneity. This hypothesis suggests that people have more complex representations of the group they belong to than of members of the out-group. This may explain why ethnic newcomers tend to consider white Americans as homogeneous and host groups also consider ethnic minorities as a homogeneous group. In fact, the characteristics of white Americans are heterogeneous; a large part of white Americans are classified as minority members depending on their socio-structural location in

society and their ethnicity, for example, Jewish, Italian, Polish or Irish.

Nevertheless, the portrayals of either ethnic or host media may reinforce the tendency to perceive their designated out-groups as highly homogeneous. It is also possible that media coverage which for example portrays certain ethnic members as poor, dirty, dishonest, unnaturally passionate or psychologically disturbed may influence the in-group members' prejudice of out-group members. If people perceive out-group members negatively according to the media presentation, then the result is that social interaction between minority and majority becomes tenuous and uncomfortable.

While mass media, either ethnic or host, amplify this kind of in-group/out-group bias, main socialization channels such as family, friends, and educational institutions, sometimes, correct media biases and contribute to the newcomers' assimilation to the host society. But other times they may contribute to the process of segregation or stratification. Weber argues that groups try to maintain a subjective belief in their unique culture. This belief is considered to be functional for the formation of groups. On the other hand, it contributes to segregation among groups. For example, certain ethnic groups try to prevent their members from being integrated (assimilating) into other ethnic groups; They respect their elders who keep strong ethnic values and marginalize other ethnic members who become more assimilated into the white American society. For example, some Asian Americans

attack their "Americanized" peers as "bananas" a term which refers to people who have yellow skin color but are filled with white characteristics. The frequent use of this kind of contemptuous term implies that these groups experience a crisis of social identification. Thus, hardcore ethnic group members who have worried about their ethnic future, press their young members to uphold their ethnic tradition and group norms. This symbolic pressure may be functional for the survival of ethnic cultures. Similar phenomena may be found in Whyte's (1943) "Street Corner Society," which describes an internal mechanism of social control in a slum community.

However, maintaining ethnicity does not necessarily mean that people intend not to integrate into the mainstream society. People can uphold their ethnicity and at the same time integrate into the host society. These people are often called "multi-cultural men (persons)" (Adler, 1976) or "bi-cultural groups" (Gudykunst and Halsall, 1980). Hurh and Kim (1984) use the term "adhesive adaptation" to refer to this special type of newcomer integration to the host society. This term implies that ethnic newcomers' social relations with members of the host society are superimposed on the newcomers' traditional culture and social networks, without replacing or modifying any significant part of their own world. Economic motivations may play a significant role in "adhesive adaptation." In their study of Korean immigrants in Los Angeles, Hurh and Kim found that several business groups of ethnic newcomers progressively seek to internalize American norms

and values, probably because they want to keep economic opportunity in the host community. But they strongly maintain their ethnicity in the family or ethnic community settings. Ethnic newspapers have partially contributed to these two opposite directions of assimilation (Chang, 1972; J. Kim, 1980; H. Kim, 1985; Shim, 1990) and create a hybrid ethnic American culture (Shim, 1991).

In order to understand this complex process of media intervention, researchers need to establish a contingency model of intergroup relations which would describe possible interaction effects of people's direct cultural contacts and their mass media use on group integration or stratification. Moreover, researchers need to look at how media intervene in newcomers' intergroup relations and what media content relates to newcomers' assimilation to the host society.

III. The Role of Mass Media in Intergroup Relations

Communication scholars are generally conscious that the term "media" is plural, yet not many studies have elaborated on how different media play differing roles in the process of newcomers' integration to the host society. Janis (1982) suggests that if a group receives differing but accurate information from various significant others, then it may prevent the disastrous consequences of "groupthink" or group uniformity. Family members, peers and authority figures are significant others, especially for ethnic newcomers. One typical phenomena of ethnic communities

in North America is that they may not have authority figures or formal institutions in the ethnic communities. Ethnic newspapers may fill this gap. Especially ethnic newspapers or other media institutions are the mostly well-organized institutions in certain ethnic communities (Shim, 1991). Thus, they tend to organize ethnic group opinions and protect ethnic interests. These news organizations can be considered to be "significant others" or leadership institutions to ethnic members in the same way that neighborhood or community newspapers play a leadership role in urban and rural communities (for the review, see Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, 1980, and Shim, 1991). Thus, ethnic media, like community newspapers, tend to integrate ethnic members or segregate their readers from the host community.

Since all newcomers make their homes in the host community, mainstream media may also aid them to adapt to the new life or may hinder their assimilation.

1. The Role of Mainstream Media in Intergroup Relations

The race problem in the United States may be considered "a problem in assimilation" (Park, 1914). Cooley (1909), Dewey (1927), Park (1940) and Wirth (1948) have acknowledged the potential influence of mass media institutions, and all of them regard newspapers as potentially compensatory and integrative factors in a community. These scholars argue that the mass media have an influence on building shared sentiment, common culture and a national type by integrating various racial groups to the

host society.

Contrary to these early studies in sociology, which emphasize positive function of the newspaper in integrating various immigrants, current communication studies tend to confine their focus to the negative portrayal of ethnic minorities in typical American television programs. Two types of research approaches are worthy of mention: 1) content analysis of mainstream American television programs and 2) experimental studies of media effects related to negative portrayals of ethnic minorities in the media.

Several scholars have analyzed various forms of television content to determine how each form uniquely distorts ethnic minorities (Greenberg, 1980; Gerbner and Signorielli, 1979). They found some distortions of ethnic minorities in typical metropolitan newspapers and major television networks. For example, Gutierrez (1978), in a study on news coverage of Mexican Americans and the response of the white Americans to that coverage, showed that coverage of Chicanos was neither balanced, adequate, nor objective. He also reported that news stories tended to focus on Latinos as problematic people causing or beset by social problems. However, Turk, Richard, Bryson and Johnson (1989) cautioned that Hispanics appear to get ample and fair coverage in San Antonio and Albuquerque, where the large Hispanic proportion of the city population is manifest (approximately 33% in Albuquerque and 41% in San Antonio). The magnitude of coverage of Hispanics is proportional to the population size, and the rate

of negative portrayals of Hispanics is comparable to the rate for white Americans.

Other scholars have studied the influence of portrayals of antisocial behavior, including that of ethnic minorities. Interpretations of the results of television effects differ. A meta-analysis of 230 studies of television effects on antisocial behavior reports that "the effect of television on role stereotyping was particularly strong (.90)" under experimental conditions (Hearold, 1986). However, McGuire's (1985) review of major television effects studies concludes that the demonstrated impact of media portrayal is surprisingly slight. Although he speculated that there are strong media effects on intergroup relations, McGuire suggests that, in order to measure media effects correctly, possible counter effects of media programs must be controlled and accurate measurement of long term effects needs to be improved.

Hartmann and Husband (1974), in their study of British children's perceptions of immigrants, showed that, while the magnitude of media exposure and degree of "prejudice" are not directly correlated, the media are a more important source of knowledge and ideas than are personal contacts in areas where immigrant populations are small. They also showed that the media are associated with a view of immigrants as likely to cause trouble or be associated with conflict. With the findings of negative portrayals of Mods and Rockers, Cohen (1973) argued that "the mass media provide a major source of knowledge in a

segregated society of what the consensus actually is and what the nature of deviation is." He reasoned that mainstream media are very sensitive about possible threats from strange groups and mobilize to protect their own norms and values. Consequently, ethnic newcomers may be portrayed as a dangerous group which challenges the status quo of the host society.

Many critical researchers agree with this view. Herman (1985) found that media coverage tend to concentrate on powerful groups, and argued that less powerful groups are marginalized through media coverage. Olien, Donohue and Tichenor (1990) support this argument in saying that typical American mass media tend to marginalize lay people or minorities' interests in order to protect the "dominant" group's interests. What these Minnesota scholars propose in their community-conflict studies is that mass media play different roles depending on the degree of pluralism in a community, which is significantly correlated to the community size. The mass media in homogeneous communities maintain community harmony through top-down information control while the media in a heterogeneous community compromise group conflict. In heterogeneous community groups, interests are diverse and each group has its own power and voice. The role of community mass media can be extended to the national level; the mass media in a culturally homogeneous nation try to maintain national harmony through top-down information control while the media in a culturally heterogenous nation (i.e., the United States) try to compromise intergroup conflicts.

From the perspective of ethnic media consumers, the differing effects of the print media and broadcast media may have to do with the level of information processing, as the print sources require deeper processing and television contents require fast processing (Roloff and Berger, 1982). Television programs may amplify negative images of deviant ethnic minorities through superficial coverage since it has more believability over print media. In contrast, newspapers tend to gain more credibility with complicated topics, for example, interracial relations and racism, because they are more flexible in terms of time and space in their coverage than other audio-visual media. Thus the sophisticated coverage of ethnic issues in the typical metropolitan newspaper may improve lay peoples' understanding of intriguing ethnic issues such as black and Hispanic conflicts.

Becker and Whitney (1980) suggest a different interpretation of media dependency relations, that reliance on newspapers is positively related to one's political knowledge, whereas reliance on television is negatively correlated to that knowledge. Thus, a certain ethnic group which is heavily dependent on television or radio may not increase its political knowledge more than the group which relies on newspaper information. Benton and Frazier (1986) also reported that while both media have strong effects on the individual's agenda at the most general level of information, only newspapers set agendas at the specific level of information. Thus ethnic newspapers function as a powerful institution in an ethnic community while television networks do not have comparable

power in dealing with specific ethnic issues (Shim, 1991). As Bogart (1975) points out, newspaper industries have the power to boost local economy but television industries do not have comparable power to create community jobs. With a same logic, ethnic newspaper may contribute to the development of ethnic community by creating ethnic jobs, but ethnic television stations do not. In addition, Chaffee, Nass and Yang (1990) found that for Koreans who are long-term residents of the U.S. and those with strong language skills, the newspaper is the main predictor of political knowledge. Among short-term residents who lack English competence, the TV news viewing positively relates to the increase in political knowledge. Thus ethnic newcomers may bridge the gap of their secondary political socialization through television watching.

Markus and Zajonc (1985) cautioned regarding research at the level of social cognition and suggested that researchers should ask how a group's schema is constructed, negotiated and diffused through communication processes. Only a few ethnic communication studies have incorporated these research questions dealing with ethnic members' social construction of reality in their new communities (for an example, see Allen and Hatchett, 1986).

So far, this essay has dealt with the mass media's negative portrayal of the ethnic groups and its possible effects on the media users' acceptance of ethnic newcomers' assimilation into the host society. Literature on this topic presents controversial findings and scholarly agreement has not been achieved. More

empirical evidence needs to be considered in order to achieve better conclusions.

2. The Role of Ethnic Mass Media in Newcomers' Adaptation Processes

International or ethnic newspapers in America using languages other than English were probably at their peak just before World War I, when close to 1,500 newspapers were published in 37 different languages (Park, 1922). Early on the press was drawn into the general debate over immigration and whether its effect on American society was positive or negative. Critics were concerned that the immigrant newspapers were controlled by foreigners and were serving as politically alien institutions in America. Some looked at the publication of foreign language newspapers in the United States as a "reckless and potentially dangerous process" of eroding traditional American values. However, Park (1922) claimed that the American environment eventually would change the contents of the immigrant newspapers to reflect what was happening in the American ethnic community. Furthermore, he thought that these ethnic newspapers indicated the diversity of Americanism and served the informational needs of the ethnic minority.

The early sociologists, Park and Merton, recognized two basic functions of ethnic newspapers. One was to help newcomers to adapt to the cultural values of the host country, and the other was to allow immigrants to preserve their ethnic heritage in the new environment. Early sociologists made few attempts to

explain why these seemingly contradictory functions coexisted. Marzolf (1972), in her doctoral dissertation on Danish-American newspapers, introduced time as a factor to distinguish one function from another. According to Marzolf, the ethnic press assists newcomers in making a smooth transition from their old culture to the new one when they have recently relocated to a new society. However, she reasoned that the same press may play the opposite role by delaying the newcomers' adaptation to the host culture and values at a later time.

This theme of the different functions of ethnic newspapers has recurred recently. Now, Asian and Hispanic newspapers are taking the place of earlier European language newspapers. Two groups of scholars have disagreed about the role of current ethnic newspapers. One presents the assimilation-acculturation view based on the melting-pot theories, and the other emphasizes the cultural pluralism based on the ethnicity difference (for the literature review, see Jeffres and Hur, 1980; Seeman, 1981; Yinger, 1985; Subervi-Velez, 1986; Kim, 1988). The scholars in the tradition of the assimilation-acculturation view have indicated that the use of ethnic newspapers, in the long run, prevents newcomers from integrating into their new community (DeFleur and Cho, 1957; Young Kim, 1977; Jin Kim, 1980). The other group of scholars, sympathizing with cultural pluralism, has emphasized that ethnic newspapers provide necessary information for newcomers' adaptation to the new community as well as a means for them to enjoy ethnic cultural achievements

(Subervi-Velez, 1986; Yang, 1988). They have predicted that the ethnic newspaper will fill those needs of ethnic members that the typical American newspaper does not provide.

However, these scholars, even with different theoretical backgrounds, have generally agreed upon the role of the host community newspaper and showed that the use of a typical American newspaper is positively related to newcomers' adaptation to the host cultural values. These findings should not be generalized to intergroup relations because many ethnic leaders have complained about negative portrayals of ethnic members in mainstream media.

One thing common in both views is that neither the acculturation-assimilation model nor pluralism offers a theoretical framework in which to incorporate the alternative view. Both groups of scholars are also likely to be biased in their presumption that ethnic newspapers are static in their growth, small in subscription size, inferior in coverage and lacking in resources. But this presumption may be wrong. According to the field observation reports on ethnic newspapers, their management styles are quite different from those of family type businesses in the early period of European ethnic newspapers. For example, one Korean-American newspaper in Los Angeles has more than 300 employees including 69 reporters, and it has seven subsidiary newspaper firms which are independently managed in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Seattle, and other major North American cities (Shim, 1991). Many ethnic newspapers also utilize sophisticated technologies such as computers and

satellites in news coverage, and their international networks include a home country news agency. These international networks provide ethnic media with cultural strength by linking their works to the home country culture. Ethnic news sources tend to be friendly to the ethnic journalists since they share a common culture. In addition, ethnic newspapers occasionally provide general counseling as well as internship programs for their ethnic students who otherwise are frequently isolated and rarely have the opportunity to work in a typical American newsroom. Many ethnic minority journalists working for typical metropolitan newspapers have gone through such programs (LaBrie, 1974; Shim, 1991). By offering many educational programs and information on topics such as health and tax reports and voter registration, ethnic newspapers try to eliminate the "linguistic and cultural vacuum" in the ethnic communities and connect ethnic communities to the mainstream society.

Most communication-acculturation studies (Chang, 1972; Nagata, 1969; Yum, 1980; Young Kim, 1977, 1984, 1988; Jin Kim, 1980; Jeffres and Hur, 1980; Chaffee, Nass and Yang, 1989), whether such scholars' negative presumptions about ethnic media are right or wrong, are generally rooted in the socialization or learning theory that newspapers provide new knowledge about the host community. These scholars reason that newcomers learn new attitudes and behavior from the mass media and convert their cognitive system from the old to the new one through participation in host communication systems. For example, Jeffres

explains that "exposure to sex-role and other societal stereotypes found in mass media will help foster the development of comparable attitudes and behavior" (Jeffres, 1986; Vincent 1989). Most of these scholars attempt to link communication behavior with a newcomer's value system and attribute the differences in newcomers' values to the different acculturation patterns.

Kim (1988) especially delineates a causal model of communication-acculturation through a number of studies and succeeds in demonstrating some causal relationships between media use and acculturation. However, Kim deals mainly with psychological variables such as "acculturation motivation." She implicitly treats acculturation as an individual phenomenon. Yet, acculturation is more likely to occur at the group level (Borardus, 1949; Siegel et al., 1953; Teske and Nelson, 1974). More critically, if her theory is right, the size of ethnic communities should have decreased over time. But ethnic communities in the North America generally have become larger than before. In addition, many U.S. metropolitan cities have changed their faces through a resurgence of immigrant entrepreneurship, and the revival of ethnic small business tends to build a local ethnic economy and contributes to solving the problem of ethnic members' unemployment (Light and Bonacich, 1988). Furthermore, the explication of the concept of acculturation is not thorough enough to deal with the complex, dynamic, and confounded phenomena of intergroup dynamics. For

example, based on so-called system theory and homeostatic assumptions, Kim (1988) conceptualized immigrants' adaptation to the host society as a generic process which leads to psychological stability. But the pattern of adaptation in the host country is not always the zero-sum game toward the status-quo which her supposed system theory predicts.

These scholars, whose studies are mixed with linear models of communication, tend to ignore the socio-structural conditions of intergroup relations when they deal with newcomers' assimilation process. They generally assume that newcomers are heading for the mainstream society. Thus, their model of adaptation is based on the principle of conformity to the majority. If newcomers do not adopt mainstream values, then researchers tend to consider them more or less as deviant or deficient people who are not able to adapt themselves to the mainstream society. For this reason, they try to find out the explanation of newcomers' unfitness to the host society by including invariant trait or personality variables such as intelligence, communication skills and acculturation motivation. The consequence of this model is to blame ethnic members who do not achieve acculturation and assimilation. Or, these scholars tend to disparage ethnic institutions, such as ethnic newspapers, by suggesting that reading ethnic newspapers is dysfunctional to assimilation after a certain point in time, although the replicated studies do not support this claim (Shah, 1990; Haeryon Kim, 1985). They seem to recommend not reading ethnic newspapers

since they consider ethnic newspapers as second-class institutions which have a negative function in newcomers' adoption of mainstream American values and culture.

With this kind of recommendation, it seems obvious that ethnic mass media will disappear just as early European mass media became extinct. The question is then whether this consequence is good for a pluralistic society which emphasizes socio-cultural diversity and economic affluence. If not, what other theories and suggestions are available for the survival of ethnic or minority media and their contributions to the better intergroup relations? Moscovici's framework of innovation and Hollander's transactional model of the leadership influence may provide the new niche for the survival of ethnic media.

IV. The New Model of Ethnic Media Studies and Intergroup Relations

As mentioned earlier, the position of this essay is that ethnic media play a leadership role in the ethnic community. This means that they protect ethnic economic and political interests as well as cultural values when intergroup conflicts occur. An ethnic group needs well-organized institutions and an effective strategy when its social well-being is threatened by an attack from another group. Nevertheless, ethnic or minority communities tend not to have well-organized social institutions. Therefore, the ethnic media shape individual interests by focusing on specific events for ethnic community welfare as well as by providing an ethnic community agenda, for example, fighting

against street crime. They do so because their readers or viewers have a property interest in a local ethnic community. The success of ethnic businesses directly influences advertising avenues of ethnic media. The media mobilize the residents to keep the community clean and provide security so that ethnic group members can establish better business environments and attract more customers than usual. Ethnic newspapers are very sensitive about crime news in the ethnic community, and thus try to keep the security issue alive in the minds of the ethnic media consumers.

When pulled together, certain ethnic newspapers have resources to play a leadership role in ethnic communities. According to Hollander's transactional model of leadership, leadership is conceived of as a two-way influence process between the leader and followers who perceive and evaluate the leader in the context of situational demands. Unlike those approaches which focus on the unidirection of leadership (such as one-way influence only from leaders to followers), the transactional approach conceives of a leader as a group resource and emphasizes reciprocal influence in leadership. It takes into account the perceptions and interactions involved in the relationship of the leader and his followers.

This essay considers ethnic media as a source of leadership. Thus, the ethnic media's news coverage can vary according to the expectations of the media audience and their reactions to different issues. Ethnic members as media users or followers become the crucial factor in these relationships. Basically,

followers or media users can exert influence on or contribute to ethnic media's leadership in the following ways: 1) by making editorial demands, 2) by showing their satisfaction with media news coverage, and 3) by participating in ethnic community decision making (for a detailed discussion of followers' contribution to leadership, see Hollander, 1985).

Since the transactional model of leadership concerns about influence processes, Moscovici's framework of social influence and conformity processes may add some strength to the existing theory of community newspaper and its leadership performance. In the American tradition of conformity studies, Sherif argues that when individuals are deprived of a social frame of reference and are confronted with an unstable and ambiguous reality, their judgements and perceptions become uncertain and variable. As a similar reason, ethnic newcomers have no way of coming to terms with this kind of situation and reducing their uncertainty except by engaging in an interaction during which they exchange the information available to them and establish a common norm. Ethnic media can provide valuable information for ethnic newcomers. By using this information actively, ethnic members construct their own group norms. Ethnic groups can also avoid majoritarian pressures to conform to the dominant social norms if the ethnic member have their own group-support system. It is also possible that ethnic members can easily adjust themselves to the host society by using important information about the host society which appears in ethnic newspapers.

In the ethnic community, community size is probably related to community pluralism as Tichenor et al. (1980) have demonstrated in over 20 years of community studies. It is fair to say that ethnic community structure will change in accordance with the geographical area in which ethnic group members live. In the United States new ethnic communities such as Asian and Hispanic one have become larger over time. Therefore, the ethnic media's social control function needs to be changed in order to continually influence ethnic audiences. The community size also directly determines possible media subscribers as well as advertising avenues.

Referring back to the leadership function of ethnic media, it may be useful to apply Moscovici's framework of innovation to the ethnic media. Moscovici's concept of innovation is inherently different from a form of conformity. The innovation process in its genuine form stands "at the opposite pole from the conformity process." This concept suggests that in order to influence majority groups, minority members should be consistent and innovative. If ethnic media accept this suggestion, they should be consistent in their coverage of ethnic matters as well as mainstream society. They also need to be innovative in order to survive in the competitive world of journalism. When an ethnic newspaper expresses sufficient autonomy and commitment, its readers respect the newspaper's opinion and continually support its editorial policy by subscribing to that paper. When ethnic newspapers have a significant amount of readership and

advertisement revenues, they can influence ethnic as well as majority opinion about certain community issues and contribute their strengths to the host society.

V. Conclusion

This essay began with the problem of how research can address the various roles different media play in intergroup relations during the assimilation period experienced by newcomers. Given the concept of assimilation defined above by comparing it with that of acculturation, different roles of mass media have been considered in the context of intergroup relations by introducing a social psychological perspective. On this basis, this essay proposes a new theoretical framework for considering ethnic media whereby ethnic media are viewed as community leadership resources. On a prescriptive sense, ethnic media should cultivate continuous innovation in their approach to serving ethnic readers. This approach may also be applied to neighborhood or rural community media system.

Finally, the question arises whether ethnic media need to be a set of conformist institutions conveying the ingredients of a socially conservative consensus or whether they need serve a pluralistic society by competing with the typical metropolitan mass media. The answer is neither the one nor the other. Although most ethnic media tend to perform only one function, they, especially ethnic newspapers, should perform both the "watch dog" and "guard dog" functions for their audiences. The best ethnic

newspapers deserve the greatest attention of ethnic readers just as the best lands should be cultivated by the best farmers. Such is the spirit of human history.

<Notes>

1. Rosengren distinguishes the societal system from the social system. The societal system is the umbrella concept including political, economic and cultural systems; a social system such as a friendly association is one part of the societal system. He also argues that a cultural system has a structure similar to that of other societal systems.

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